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emphasizing the letter of its observance, but by pointing out its wider reach and deeper import, so he fulfilled prophecy, not because he is the fulfiller of prophetic predictions, but because he is the fulfiller of prophetic ideals."

We seem to see, under this form of a scholarly treatment of the historical process of the development of Biblical interpretation and theory in the Christian Church, the true presentment of an earnest Christian mind, turning from the old traditional views of prophecy, inspiration, and infallibility to the new positions gained on these subjects by modern critical scholarship. The tone is reverent and conservative, but it clearly recognizes the baneful effects of the old way of thinking, and justifies the new thought by its higher moral, natural, and reasonable results, as revealing a more vital and real spiritual interest and significance in the whole Bible. It is an admirable book for the intelligent layman as well as for the clergy, amid the conflicting and, to many, the unsettling views of the present day.

CHARLES L. WELLS.

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IS MARK A ROMAN GOSPEL? Harvard Theological Studies, VII. By Benjamin W. Bacon, Professor of New Testament Criticism, Yale University. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 1919.

Compared with Old Testament criticism, the results of New Testament criticism are much more conservative. Dates are being put further back, and the early accepted authorship of the several books more generally recognized. Nearly all of the New Testament writings are now, by almost universal agreement, placed well within the limits of the first century and most of them are acknowledged to have been written by those whose names they bear. When we remember that only about seventy-five years ago, Baur and the advanced critics of the Tübingen School regarded only four Pauline epistles as genuine, and scattered the other New Testament writings all up and down the second century the change, which the last two or three decades have seen in the critical questions regarding the date and authorship of these writings, is profoundly impressive. For one thing, it has taken the very ground out from under all the mythical, legendary and most of the development theories of the origins of

Christianity, for it has not left them time nor darkness in which to work. Perhaps the most striking change is to be noted in the position assigned to the Markan Gospel. From having been regarded as one of the later and least important of the Synoptic Gospels it is now considered by scholars generally not only as the earliest, nearest to the events which it so vividly and so minutely describes, but also as the actual basis and one of the chief sources of the other two, Matthew and Luke, who, either singly or together, include in their record all but about fifty of its seven hundred verses. Indeed, our writer calls them "the two later satellites of Mark." Consequently this gospel, the least noticed and commented upon in early times, has been subjected to a fire of critical analysis and investigation exceeded only by that accorded to the Fourth Gospel.

In the brief treatise before us, Professor Bacon undertakes to prove what is almost universally accepted by modern critical scholarship and confirmed by the earlier and weightier part of the testimony of the Early Church, although he discards or controverts the evidence by which it has been maintained up to the present time—that the gospel according to Mark had its origin in Rome. The paper is divided into four parts: The Tradition, Dissemination, Internal Evidence, and Conclusion. His theory is that the gospel is a product of the last part of the first century by an unknown writer, as a product of that 'strong' Paulinism which at Rome was later brought, through the providence of God and the prevailing Spirit of Paul, the peacemaker, into sympathy and loyal union with the 'weak'." The striking and original part of the argument is his analysis of the Pauline Epistles to and from Rome, in order to find in them the conditions which seem to him to have produced the Markan Gospel, that is, the struggle "between 'strong' (those 'of Paul') and 'weak' (those 'of Cephas')." In the gospel he finds this in the "special emphasis on Jesus' opposition to the ceremonialism in general, and to distinctions of meats in particular," which he regards as the most distinctive features in the motive and character of Mark, and therefore proceeds to show the "relation between it and early 'tendency' at Rome." How far he succeeds in this argument, which certainly involves a certain amount of over-emphasis of some passages and a corresponding neglect of others, the reader may easily decide.

"This gospel," he affirms, "consists largely, perhaps almost exclusively, of Aramaic documentary material preserved in the archives of the Church in Rome." This he proves by the equally well-attested (?) statement that "such material must have been carried everywhere from Palestine." "Of all quarters," he continues, "from which to expect early and wide dissemination of such a gospel as Mark, Rome is by all odds the most probable." This method reminds us of the young Boston lawyer, who, being asked to prove his assertion that he was the brightest lawyer at the Suffolk bar, replied: "I don't need to prove it; I admit it."

The paper is marked by a supercilious and disparaging depreciation of sources, which may be critical in a sophistical way, but is more calculated to arouse opposition than to bring conviction. An example is afforded in his remarks about tradition, which he seems to consider only in its depraved meaning of a body of unauthentic and unhistorical hearsay opinions. He says, "Tradition in general is like the dragoman who escorts the devout traveller through the Holy Land: its business is to please." He likens it to St. Paul's charity, which "must 'know all mysteries and all knowledge'" [though this, we believe, was not a characteristic of charity as portrayed by St. Paul], "and while it cannot be said to 'endure all things' it certainly 'believeth all things, hopeth all things,' and 'never faileth'." From this point of view he disposes of 1 Peter, Papias, Clement of Alexandria and Irenæus. It may be witty, but it is neither reverent nor scholarly. Nor is the Church at Jerusalem fittingly described as "the Christian Caliphate of Jerusalem." The relation of Mark's gospel to Peter is very inadequately, not to say slightingly, considered. "The Gospel as regards its Evangelic data is both traditionally, and, to some extent as a matter of observed fact, a record of anecdotes derived from Peter." 1 Peter, Acts, the Elder John represent successive stages in the tradition which leads to the attachment of the name of Mark to Peter. Not the least important of these links is that wherein the Pauline encourager (from Rome?) of the Pauline churches of Asia, under the fire of Domitian's persecution, borrows the name of Peter, using also the names of Paul's lieutenants, Silvanus and Mark, as his intermediaries. "In epistle and gospel alike the hands are the hands of Peter, but the voice is the voice of Paul. Papias' exegesis and criticism will hardly stand; but in at-

tributing both epistle and gospel to Rome, Papias falls in at least with certain striking features shared by these two writings. Both are Pauline to the core as regards questions of faith and practice. Nevertheless, both would be understood as speaking not for Paul but for Peter." Why not explain this similarity by supposing that both spoke for Christ, or is there not enough genuine and original remnant of Jesus' teaching? Our critic in this paper apparently uses the gospels as if they were made up of imaginary scenes and fictitious sayings, at the close of the first century, by anonymous and irresponsible authors who themselves composed many of the sayings attributed to Jesus. "Luke and Mark," he says, "both commingle data characterized by true historical insight, which they derive from their sources, with a larger or smaller amount of misunderstanding and confusion supplied by a later hand." This sentence is about as depreciatory, indefinite, misleading and as subversive of any confidence in the gospel record as could well be framed. We will give the writer credit for acknowledging that some points "must be presented more or less dogmatically for lack of opportunity to develop evidence."

"Our inquiry," he maintains, however, "lays bare a persistent apologetic dating back at least to Papias, if not to the author of 1 Peter himself, an apologetic which is bent on binding the aged Peter and carrying him away, whither he would not, to become the forefather of the Roman Papacy. By all means, whether with much persuasion or little, the chief apostle must be induced to give his endorsement to Rome's succession and Rome's Gospel, to find the one and to preach, if not actually to dictate, the other. This is the animus of the whole body of tradition from Papias onward." Now, it is really too bad to bring in the bogy of the Roman Papacy to frighten us away from admitting the genuineness of Mark and 1 Peter. Futhermore, it is unsound reasoning historically and exegetically. It is far too early for a hint or suggestion of Papal claims, and it is in Matthew, not in Mark, that we find the saying about the founding of the Church on the Rock, which a very late exegesis identified with Peter.

If the writer has given all the arguments he can adduce, we must conclude that Mark is a Roman gospel only by the merest possibility. It is true that he does not devote his whole space to a consideration of the Markan Gospel, but gives us, incidentally as it were, his views on nearly all the New Testament books and many other early Christian writings.

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